

The Warrior Ethos and the Determination to Win

On November 16, 2003, the Chief of Staff of the Army, GEN Schoomaker, came to West Point to address the Corps of Cadets. In his remarks, he unveiled the Army's "Warrior Ethos". This is his vision for the spirit of the Army. It is much more than one's assignments or training – you can spend a year in Iraq and not carry the warrior ethos within your heart. It is who you are and how you view yourself and your professional responsibilities as a soldier.

I am proud to report our programs, activities, and events to foster a deeper internalization of the Warrior Ethos are directly in line with the CSA's vision.

Our efforts started with a mission analysis, which led to a revised mission statement for USCC, which specifically incorporates much of the CSA's vision. Our revised mission statement, which I approved in October, 2002, is,

“To develop each cadet into a **commissioned leader of character** who possesses the **will to win**, **personal courage**, **adaptability**, **physical fitness** and **mental toughness** essential to the profession of arms, and is inspired to a career of **professional excellence** in the United States Army.”

This restated mission led us next to revise our *Greenbook*, which describes the Military Program goals, requirements, activities, and courses for the Corps of Cadets during their 47-month West Point experience.

Although the *Greenbook* describes our Military Program, my responsibilities as Commandant are to develop cadets militarily, physically, and ethically. Therefore, the *Greenbook* also describes activities in the Physical Program and character development programs which contribute to our Military Program goals.

These changes were the latest evolutionary developments to West Point's leader development programs, which the Academy leadership has continued to refine over the years. We have seen its success in many areas, but I want to discuss two areas in particular in which we are meeting the CSA's intent – athletics and military training.

As you know, athletic competition “on the fields of friendly strife” has a long and storied history, but it is much more than just our corps squad sports teams. West Point also boasts 26 competitive clubs and teams, which compete at the intercollegiate level, and they are winning championships in sports and skills with direct military applications. Here are a few of our success stories from last season and the first semester of this academic year:

- Our men's Rugby Team was the Northeast Collegiate Champions and 4th in the nation last year. Our women's Rugby Team won the Metropolitan New York Rugby Union championship in their first year.
- Our Combat Weapons Team won the National Collegiate Championship for the fourth consecutive year, beating both Air Force and Navy.
- Our Sport Parachute Team is the national collegiate team champion, and Cadet Kevin Krupski ('05) is the overall National Collegiate Parachuting Champion. In the process, we beat Air Force, the defending national champion.
- Our Triathlon Teams, both men's and women's, won the Mid-Atlantic Collegiate Championships and both beat Navy. Five cadets qualified for the World Championships in Portugal in May, 2004.
- Our Orienteering Team won the National Collegiate Championship; Cadet Allen Griffith ('06) is the national champion in the 19- and 20-year-old male division.
- Our men's and women's Team Handball teams won their National Collegiate Championships; the men's championship was their sixth straight.
- Our Judo Team won its fourth consecutive Eastern Collegiate championship and beat both Navy and Air Force.
- Our Pistol Team placed 3rd in the National Intercollegiate Pistol Championships.

These teams and cadets are champions who exemplify the warrior ethos. They refuse to give up; they persevere through cold, heat, mud, rain, and pain; they understand how their performances as individuals affect the team.

We are also continually improving our military science courses and summer training programs to foster the internalization of the Warrior Ethos in our future leaders.

This past August marked the reintroduction of core Military Science (MS) courses back into the academic year. Cadets now take their MS courses alongside chemistry, physics, political science and history. This was a significant, and overdue, achievement and we firmly believe it will better prepare our cadets for commissioning and will serve as a constant reminder to them of the reason they are here and the ultimate purpose of their education and training – to serve their country as leaders of character who are committed to professional excellence as officers in the world's most powerful army.

We have also made important strides in our summer military training programs to provide an environment which continually exposes cadets to the principles of the Warrior Ethos. Prior to beginning Cadet Basic Training (CBT) or Cadet Field Training (CFT), the cadet cadres complete the Warrior Challenge, a 36-hour event which stresses weapons tasks, land navigation, obstacle course, boat movement, and a marksmanship competition. Over the past few years, we have added more weapons training for cadets to focus on foundational marksmanship skills and they are shooting more. The yearlings again qualify with their assigned weapons at Camp Buckner and each squad participates in a live-fire exercise as a part of the CFT capstone exercise, Operation Highland Warrior. Additionally, cadets receive more combatives instruction in both CBT and CFT, which complement the academic year instruction received from the Department of Physical Education. We want them tough, fit, resilient and aggressive. They are measuring up to the challenge.

Conversations with our recent graduates in the field in Iraq and Afghanistan describe a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world where junior officers must switch in an instant from employing lethal violence to employing nation-building skills, all in a physically stressful

environment as they struggle to re-build ravaged countries, one school and neighborhood council at a time.

The Warrior Ethos describes the mind-set which our graduates must have in order to succeed and to accomplish these missions. It applies equally to combat operations and to nation-building, because in today's world, the two are never far apart. We support GEN Schoomaker's vision of the Warrior Ethos and are firmly committed to realizing his vision for the men and women of the Long Gray Line who will continue to serve our nation with valor and distinction.

Soldier's Creed -- Warrior Ethos

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills.

I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.